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The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Mississippi Judge Means Business

By Drew Pearson

Reporting from McComb, Miss., last fall, I was critical of the fact that Judge W. H. Watkins Jr. of the Pike County Circuit gave suspended sentences to the 10 white men who pleaded guilty or no-contest to the bombing of many Negro churches and homes. I now want to retract that criticism.



Pearson

In view of jury failure to convict in flagrant civil rights cases in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, Judge Watkins obviously was imposing the most practical punishment possible. Last month, furthermore, Judge Watkins showed that he meant business by slapping one of the bombers, Murphy J. Duncan, into jail for violating probation.

Duncan, the oldest of the white bombers, last October had received six months suspended sentence, two years probation, and a fine of \$500. On April 24, one day after he figured his six months suspended sentence was over, he telephoned Mrs. Reesie Timmons, wife of one of the FBI agents who had investigated him, and threatened her.

Then he telephoned Albert R. Stephens, his old boss at the Firestone division headquarters in New Orleans,

which had fired him, and proceeded to berate him.

Finally he telephoned FBI Agent Timmons and told him: "This is Mississippi and I am a Mississippian. Mississippians have Ross Barnett (the former Governor) behind them, and they can do anything they need to do and get away with it."

Mr. and Mrs. Timmons and Stephens promptly reported the vituperative conversation. Whereupon Duncan was hauled before Judge Watkins and promptly slapped into jail. He has a full six months to serve in the Pike County Jail, one of the hottest in the U.S.A.—all because he forgot that, though his suspended sentence ran out on April 23, he still was under two years probation.

Military Encroachment

Sen. Vance Hartke (D-Ind.), digging through legislative reports that most Senators don't bother to read, has come up with some interesting figures regarding military encroachment on civilian branches of Government.

He has found 41 generals and admirals serving in high civilian positions, most of them at salaries higher than those paid to the Cabinet and in one or two cases higher than any other civilian except President Johnson and Vice President Humphrey.

Hartke has also found that on Jan. 29, 1960, stand-by Ex-

ecutive orders were drawn-up to transfer much of the civilian government over to the military in case of war.

Such vital civilian agencies as the Labor, Interior, Commerce, and Health, Education, and Welfare Departments would be taken over by the military under Executive orders already drafted and ready to be put into effect with the stroke of a pen.

During World War II not one civilian agency was taken over by the military except the Coast Guard, which was placed under the Navy. Despite the most devastating war in history, the civilian texture of government was maintained.

Sen. Hartke unearthed these facts while examining the White House proposal to set aside the law requiring a civilian to head the Federal Aviation Agency and permit Lt. Gen. William McKee to become FAA Administrator. Gen. McKee is now with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, drawing a salary of \$40,565, slightly more than the third-ranking civilian, Chief Justice Warren.

Roll Call of Top Brass

Here are some of the top generals and admirals occupying policy positions, with their salaries, as unearthed by Sen. Hartke:

In the State Department, foreign policy is being directed by Gen. Maxwell Taylor,

Ambassador to Viet-Nam, drawing up to \$39,859; Gen. Herbert B. Powell, Ambassador to New Zealand, up to \$39,033; Adm. Jerauld Wright, Ambassador to Nationalist China, up to \$39,033; Adm. George W. Anderson, Ambassador to Portugal, \$39,859; Brig. Gen. Milton Summerfelt, adviser to the State Department at \$78.64 a day plus \$11,115 retirement pay; Adm. Elonzo Grantham, senior evaluation officer, \$28,570.

In NASA, besides Gen. McKee, there are Brig. Gen. Benjamin Holzman, \$28,697; Brig. Gen. Harris Hull, \$27,058; Adm. Walter F. Boone, \$40,565; Adm. Rufus Rose, \$37,175; Lt. Gen. Frank Bogart, \$37,529.

In Central Intelligence, the head of the agency is Adm. W. E. Raborn, \$38,088; also Lt. Gen. Earle W. Barnes, \$31,750 and Lt. Gen. John A. Samford, consultant, at \$94.24 a day plus \$14,175 retirement pay.

Other top brass are scattered through the Veterans Administration, Interior and Agriculture Departments and the Atomic Energy Commission. Sen. Hartke pays tribute to the caliber of these men, but points to the strict constitutional provision that ours is a civilian government.

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Drew Pearson will reveal a startling resignation from the diplomatic corps over Radio WTOP at 6:40 tonight.